



The Parrot

Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, new Californians, and, well, anybody really...

Issue # 125 Spring 2018

At the "Libes" with Mr. David McCusker

The Parrot: First of all, would you tell us a little about yourself?

Mr. McCusker: I have been a librarian for 16 years, 13 years here at ARC.

The Parrot: What are the challenges for a person in your post?

Mr. McCusker: I think one thing that is challenging is that probably



want to follow the directions, who
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90% of the students are amazing, they are awesome, they make the most of what we have to offer but every once in a while there are students who are disruptive, who do not



"Walk lightly in the spring; Mother Earth is pregnant."
Kiowan proverb



Dolly Parton Gives The Gift Of Literacy: A Library Of 100 Million Books

The Library of Congress hosted a very special guest at story time this week:

Dolly Parton.

The country music legend is also a champion of early childhood literacy, through her Imagination Library. Every month, the non-profit program mails a free book to more than a million



Parton donated a copy of Coat of Many Colors to the permanent collection of the Library of Congress to mark the delivery of the 100th million book by her nonprofit Imagination Library.

children — from infants to pre-schoolers.

Parton visited the Library of Congress on Tuesday to celebrate a major milestone in the Imagination Library's history: delivery of its 100 millionth book. Not bad for a program Parton

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Student Chirpings

People Should Live in an Apartment

Have you ever lived in an apartment? If you have lived in an apartment, you already know that living in an apartment is better than living in a house. I lived in an apartment for a couple of years when I came to the United States. In my opinion, living in an apartment has substantial benefits to residents. However, some people desire to buy their own house. I think they have a dream to beautifully decorate their own house, have more privacy, or have more space. Unfortunately, not everyone can afford to buy their own house. If you cannot buy your own house, do not be sad. Based on what I know, living in a house may also involve more costs and effort. I strongly believe that living in an apartment is much better than living in a house.

The first reason to live in an apartment is lower costs. Living in an apartment can be much more cost effective than living in a house. Heating and cooling a smaller area would save a lot of money. Moreover, you do not even need to pay your property taxes. For example, Mike, a friend who lives in Elk Grove, used to live in a big house. Now he lives in an apartment complex. When he lived in a house, he always complained about the expense of a house because of property taxes, utility bills, and house maintenance. He is satisfied with living in an apartment because he is no longer concerned about them. Another reason is that you do not have to purchase some household appliances such as a refrigerator, a dishwasher, an oven, and a washing

machine. Most apartments have these household appliances. It can help you save a lot of money, too. Another reason to live in an apartment is the financial aspect of renting. Rent is usually cheaper than a mortgage. In contrast, if you really want to buy a house, you must apply for a mortgage on your house at the bank. Every home loan represents debt for the borrower, and this can become a



problem in a number of ways. For instance, homeowners could lose a source of income through unemployment, disability, or medical bills. They might be unable to pay monthly mortgage payments. The debt can quickly become overwhelming. Actually, a couple of my friends did not pay mortgage payments; thus, they lost their houses a few years ago. Living in

an apartment means not borrowing money from the bank. You do not need to pay monthly mortgage payments for thirty years.

The second reason to live in an apartment means you need not maintain. Living in an apartment does not require you to have any maintenance skills because a team of maintenance professionals repairs everything for you. For instance, Ethan, a friend who lives in Rancho Cordova, lives in an apartment complex. One day, the washing machine broke down. He called the property manager, and the property manager sent a technician out the same day to repair the washing machine. "How much did you get charged for the washing machine?" I asked him. "I do not have to pay for it," he answered. In a house, that is one of the many

duties of the homeowner. However, a tenant does not have to worry when the washing machine, dishwasher, or refrigerator breaks or even if the air conditioning no longer works. The landlord is generally responsible for all repairs and maintenance. Another reason is that you do not need to spend more time working in the garden, fixing the fence, or repainting the walls of the house. Most apartments do not have private gardens, only small balconies. It means that if you live in an apartment, you can spend time doing whatever you please rather than mowing the lawn or sweeping around the house. Such responsibilities are generally shared among the residents when living in an apartment complex.

The third reason to live in an apartment is to have a variety of amenities. Residents would appreciate that many apartment complexes often come with amenities such as a fitness room, a swimming pool, a tennis court, or a BBQ area. I strongly believe that many residents would like to live in an apartment. For example, I lived in an apartment a couple of years when I came to the United States. I used the swimming pool and the fitness room often whenever I had free time. In the summer time, I often invited a couple of friends over, and we had a BBQ at the BBQ area. My friends and I loved that place. Furthermore, many apartment complexes provide better amenities in order to retain existing tenants and attract new tenants. Another benefit is that you can get your own parking space. If you live downtown or in a big city, one of the best benefits of apartment living is the car park. Street parking downtown or in a big city can be a nightmare and



a danger. Most apartments often come with secure parking spaces on site. Having a secure car park will probably save you money in car repairs too. For instance, I went to Los Angeles to visit my friend and parked my car on the street in a high density area. The next day, I found my car had a large dent on the left side. Another benefit is that many apartment complexes are near shopping malls, public transportation, and schools. I really believe that apartments are perfect for anyone who wants a place to call home.

In conclusion, there are substantial advantages to living in an apartment, especially if you live alone and want to save money. As you can see, there are several reasons why people should live in an apartment. First, the cost for rent is generally quite a bit lower than for a regular house. Second, a tenant does not worry about repair-

ing some household appliances. Third, many apartments come with amenities such as a fitness room, a swimming pool, a tennis court, or a BBQ area. There are even more advantages to apartment living such as security, community, size, or short term commitment. I strongly believe that living in an apartment is a great choice for a great home.



Woochul Jang
ESL W50
(Persuasive essay)



Spending Too Much Time on Social Media

We can't imagine a modern life without the Internet and social media, but sometimes it seems as if we love our Facebook friends more than our relatives. I know this problem because I spend a lot of time online, and my husband sometimes says to me, "Hey! I'm here! Can you put away your phone? I miss you." Some of us work online, and some chat with friends, but it is terrible when we replace our real life with virtual reality. There are several solutions to the problem of families spending too much time on social media: to limit online time, to spend more time outside, and to find a hobby.

The first solution to the problem of families spending too much time on social media is to limit the time which members of a family can spend online. For example, in my family, there is a rule that every dinner we spend together without the Internet or social media. We just talk to each other, tell interesting stories that happened to us or our friends, and share plans for tomorrow. I can say that it is the best part of the day for me. Many of my friends told me that they tried not to use cellphones for social media during their family meetings too, and it is wise. Usually, we don't have much time for good family conversations, so we should appreciate every minute spent together, not chatting with virtual friends. I know another example about sensibly limiting online time. My friend Oksana always turns off her Wi-Fi router every evening, so her sons have to find any other activity. At first they didn't like it, but now Oksana's boys look happy when they play, talk, or read fairy tales together. I think it's wonderful to have a special

time for the family when we can communicate with each other. We will remember our mother's laugh, father's jokes, and brother's and sister's school stories for years, but not Instagram posts.

The second solution to the problem of families spending too much time on social media is to have more time outside. I know a lot of people who like hiking. It is difficult to communicate online when your family and you are hiking, so you can get double benefit – to spend time together and make your health better. In my family there is a dog,

so we need to walk it every day. It is always family time too. We go to a park, walk, scare squirrels with our laughter, and play with the dog. We don't re-



member our smartphones at this time. Another example how to beat social media is to take care of a garden. All my relatives and friends who have one don't waste time on the Internet. They always need to plant, to water, to take care of vegetables, and in the end to harvest them. A garden's owners spend a lot of time with family and they are happy. I think it is a great idea for online-addicted people: just go outside and look around; our world is amazing!

The third solution to the problem of families spending too much time on social media is to find a hobby. If your family had a hobby, you could forget about Facebook and Instagram. I know a family in which the father and the son liked to fix their car. They did it together every evening, and this hobby became their family business. The mother in this family doesn't fix cars, of course, but she is glad to

see her men working and talking together. Some of my friends dance; some go to the gym with the whole family. In my family, we like to read books or watch movies and share opinions about them.

Sometimes we have great discussions! No one wants to chat online when we fight about our favorite characters.

The Internet makes our lives easier and more interesting. We can find any information with the speed of light. We can communicate with people from many countries. For me, the Internet and social media is an opportunity to be in touch with my family and friends in Rus-



sia, so I spend a lot of time online, but sometimes my husband and American friends miss me. Many people have the same problem. Sometimes we spend more time communicating with people who

are far away rather than with our relatives or friends near us. To limit online time, to have more time outside, and to find family hobbies are several solutions to the problem of families spending too much time on social media.

Nadia Orlov
ESL W50

(Problem-solution essay)

An Original Swiss Watch

I was the boy that was really the happiest in our neighborhood because I will never forget what my parents gave me on a day that will never repeat. I got a gift that the Swiss call "the compass of Europe". They said, "If a train in our country is late, either the train wasn't from Switzerland or your watch wasn't made in this country".

It happened on my fifteenth birthday. My parents gave me a watch as a gift, not one of the simple ones, but a Swiss Watch that only our president wore. At that time I



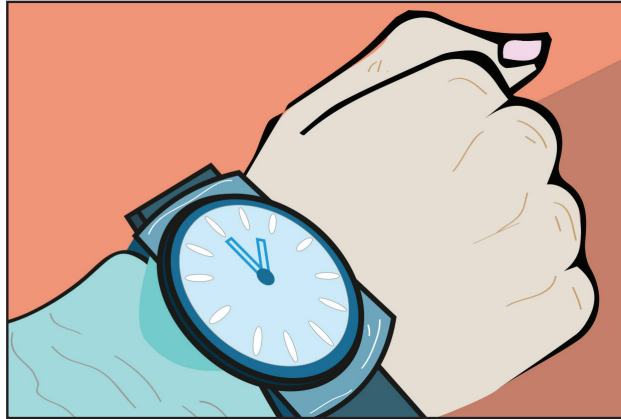
wasn't sure that the president could have such a great watch because as a teenager I felt like a king and this watch was my best witness. It happened so unexpectedly and was pretty well-organized that I remained positively surprised what my parents prepared for that day.

When I opened the watch box, I couldn't believe my eyes. I had seen many watches in my life but at that moment as a teenager I became mute and seemed to lose my hearing. I got it in my hand and couldn't hear if it was working. It had a significant weight, which indicated clearly that it was great and qualitative. It was a gilded watch for men. It was



water-resistant until 1000 feet deep. The face of the clock was dark blue like the sky at night. The hands of the clock were as long as a woman's eyelashes and its length was covered with phosphorus that shined at night. It had 16 jewels that shone around the clock face. The numbers of the clock were in Latin and had a bit bigger size than normal, with a bright green color that gave it a specific aspect for a real king's watch.

The watch was bought in Basel, Switzerland, where my father's friend went to work for two weeks. It was an original watch from the informational technology company, "Kleiner", whose name was pretty well-known in Western Europe. All watches were especially made for the team's co-workers from other countries. It was a very expensive thing for those times because we lived



in a country, the USSR, whose borders were closed to foreigners and nothing legal could come from Western Europe to us.

It's been a long time since then, but my watch is still working today, too. It is a really good watch. I have used it almost 26 year and today it is still used by my father. I'm not an advertisement agent, but such a watch I would recommend to everyone. It can't be confused with other watches because an original Swiss watch means an original in all aspects. I have become older, but the feelings come through nicely! I am still the "happiest boy in our neighborhood". I have kept it until today. I'd be happy to give you a part of my joy but you'll get it just after the reading of this essay.

Victor Severin
ESL W50
(Descriptive essay)

Good Days

It was winter, and I was working at a company. I planned to go to college in the spring, but I did not know much English. It was hard for me to become a student at American River College.

One day, I decided to go to American River College. When I went there, I found the office. I asked them to help me, but they could not understand me very well because my English was too bad. I went back home. When my sister came home, I asked her to help me. She gave me her friend's number and told me, he could help me, because he was a college student.

The next day, in the morning, I called him. I asked him to help me. He came to the college

two hours later. I filled out application. After one month, I became a student. On the first day, I was so happy. He showed me around the college. We drank some coffee and in the evening, I had a class. I went to class and I started to study English. It was exciting for me. I could communicate with different people. That way, I was practicing English language.

I was so happy because that was my plan. I was studying hard. During my college, I decided to go to the university in the future.



Hamideh Gholam Hossein
ESL W30
(Narrative essay)

Memorable Ice Cream

Each person's life is decorated with different memories and dear to our heart are different things. Without them, our lives would be dull and uninteresting. What do you think about them?

Could they help us improve the mood today? There is one bright memory that gives me a smile and warms me whenever I think about it.

I was a nine-year-old girl, the youngest in the family. We lived in a small city in a foreign country. We moved to Russia when I was five years old. My mother worked very hard to give us the necessities of life. At that time my family couldn't afford to buy me some toys or sweets. Although I didn't have these things, I had a very happy childhood because my big family gave me a lot of love. One day I was waiting for my older brother who was working in another city. I loved and missed him very much. I couldn't describe in words how happy I was to see him. However something added to my happiness. It was the dream of every child.

My mother and my older sister began to set the table for the best meal we had. They wanted to make my brother happy, but my brother also made me happy. When we sat down around the table, my brother said that I shouldn't eat that food. I didn't understand what he meant. He repeated, "You do not have to eat it. On the kitchen table, I saw something very tasty." "Go look!" I ran to the kitchen and was in shock. On the table was a big plate full of ice cream. It looked like a huge cake. I will never forget that plate and my feelings at that moment.



I remember that in the beginning, I didn't even want to touch this ice cream because it was so beautiful. On the plate there were different colors of ice cream: brown, green, red, pink, yellow, and white, and with nuts, berries, and cookies. I couldn't

believe my eyes. It smelled so great of chocolate, of kiwi, of cranberry, of blueberry, and of strawberry. I imagined every fruit and berry I smelled. I was happy just to smell them. My sister told me, "Try it; you will like it!" She gave me a big spoonful. My mouth watered while I was putting the spoon into the ice cream. I considered it the most flavorful ice cream that I had ever tried. At that moment I thought that I could eat everything at once, but it was impossible. That ice cream was a special taste for me because it started to melt a little bit. I love melted ice cream. I

also began to try every kind of ice cream separately and then I began to mix different tastes. The most delicious was chocolate with strawberry ice cream. Since then it has become my favorite combination. I got full quickly, but I didn't want to stop. I remember how I licked my fingers because the ice cream was melting and running down. I shared the ice cream with my family and everyone could feel the pleasure that I had. I felt I was the happiest child in the world.

Of course, today I can afford to eat ice cream every day but it doesn't give me as so much joy as on that day. Now I know that it's not always the things that make us happy but our warm memories about them.

Anaida Aleksanyan
ESL W50
(Narrative essay)



Types of Bad Habits

Do you have any bad habits? I think “yes”. Bad habits are peculiar to each one of us. Some of them are harmless; but the majority of bad habits usually adversely affect us and have a negative impact on our lives. It’s very important to cope with this problem by recognizing bad habits and eliminating them as soon as possible, before they become part of our personality. To get rid of bad habits, it’s useful to know their types. There are several groups of bad habits including social, psychological, and physiological.

Maybe he doesn’t even try, but I personally find it unpleasant to listen to him. The next example is interrupting people during a conversation. Everyone knows that it’s disrespectful to interrupt the interlocutor. However, a lot of people often forget this fact. This makes others nervous and annoyed while talking. For example, I’m taking G50 class this semester. I really like this course, but there is one little problem. Every day we have groupwork with our classmates. We have to share our answers and opinions during the lesson. I believe, it’s very



The first group is bad social habits. This type of habits is directly related to how a person interacts with others. Usually the causes of these habits are associated with education and the environment in which the person grew up. One of the examples of bad social habits is swearing. It is always rude and impolite towards surrounding people to swear. For instance, one of my acquaintances doesn’t control his speech and often uses swear words. As far as I know, he has always used bad words in his speech. I think this is the result of the fact that since childhood he communicated with a bad of group-peers. His mother was always trying to protect him from interacting with the people who adversely affected him. However, because of her work, she often didn’t have enough time for proper upbringing of her son. Now he can’t get rid of this bad habit.

helpful activity for ESL students because we are practicing our speaking skills. However, there is one person in the class who always interrupts his partners while working together. The worst thing is that he doesn’t consider this a problem. Consequently, no one wants to work with him. One more example of bad social habits is negative thinking. Sometimes my husband doesn’t want to see the positive side in a particular event. It just seems to him that everything is bad and it’s not possible to fix what happened. At this moment his frustration is due to moving to another country. He still misses his homeland a lot. Sometimes he just wants to leave everything and go back to Moldova, even if he realizes that there are no future prospects for us. I know that it would be easier for him to find some advantages in this situation, and I always try to explain it

to him.

The second group of bad habits is psychological addiction to certain things. The first example is the gambling addiction, when a person feels an obsessive desire to play constantly. This can even lead to personal and financial ruin. For example, every day my husband's friend spends a lot of money playing cards. He can't stop playing, despite knowing that it won't lead to anything good. The Internet addiction is also a kind of bad habit. Today there is a growing number of people dependent on the Internet. I must admit that I am also addicted to the Internet. Every day I use a computer to surf the Internet, even if I don't really need it. The next type of psychological addiction is shopaholism. Nowadays, many people, especially women, feel an irresistible desire to buy something, not paying attention to the need or consequences. One of my friends recently told me a story about a woman who was borrowing money just in order to go shopping, even if there wasn't any need.

The third group is physiological habits - the habits people maintain to satisfy their physiological needs. This type of bad habits is the most dangerous because it's so hard to overcome and get rid of this type of addiction. Alcoholism is one of the examples of physiological habits. Because of this bad habit, my dad's acquaintance lost his family. He was trying to recover from alcoholism, but his

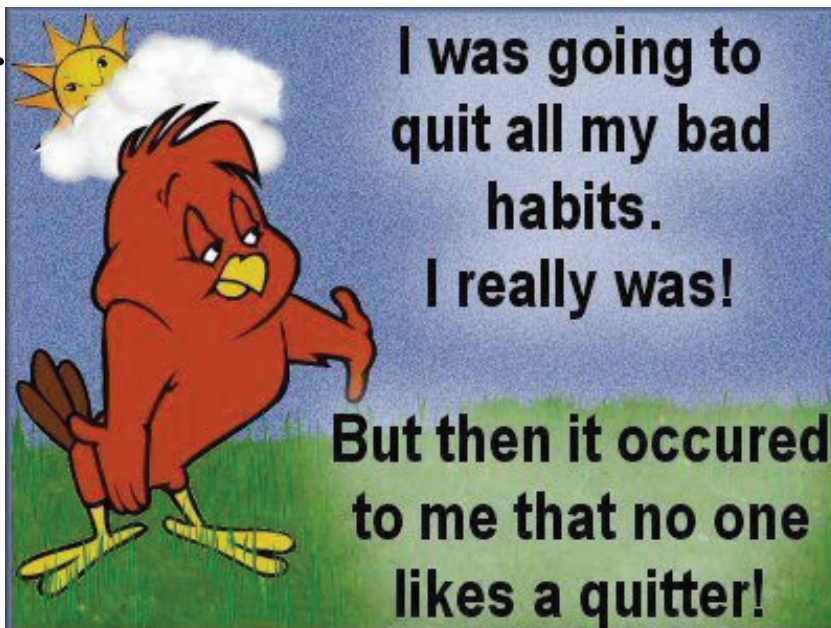
dependence was stronger than he was. The next example of physiological habits is drug addiction. Very few people in modern society do not know about the dangers of drugs. Thousands of examples tell us about the negative effects of drugs on the human body. However, despite this, drugs continue to attract people, destroying their lives. One more example is smoking. Everyone knows the fact that smoking is harmful to health. Nevertheless, every smoker thinks that the effects of smoking will not affect him and he lives for today without thinking about diseases that inevitably appear in 10-20 years. Lately, one of my friend's relatives was faced with very severe health problems due to smoking. Now he is trying to recover at any cost; but after decades of smoking it is very difficult.

In conclusion, any bad habits, in a varying degree, prevent people from finding to themselves successful in life. Moreover, sometimes people don't even recognize that they are dependent on something. Bad habits can be divided into several types: social, psychological, and physiological. Most of these habits have a negative impact on a person. That is why we need to try to overcome this problem and eliminate bad habits from our lives as soon as possible.

Arina Romanciuc

ESL W50

(Classification essay)



Addicted to Phones

Addiction concerns are growing year-by-year. If during the past years, drug and nicotine addictions were the biggest fears of society, nowadays, there is a discovery of shocking amounts of additions, such as overeating, social-media addiction, or cell-phone addiction. Up until a few years ago, no one ever gave any real consideration to cell-phone addiction. According to the PEW Research center, 67% of people who own a smart-phone or a cell-phone have admitted to checking their phone for call or messages even when it didn't vibrate or ring. In "Addicted to Phones?," the lead author, April Frawley Birdwell (2007), writes about a phone dependence problem among human beings. The author makes a very good point when she states that people are on the straight path to losing friends, relationships, and families because of heavy cell-phone use. As well as increasing modernization, people are changing their priorities, principles, and valuations. I would like to show my agreement with Birdwell (2007) by saying that cell-phones are time-taking belongings that produce a threat for relationships, inability to stop using them, and negative influence on both parents and children.

The family is a small and heavenly world, created for human beings. What happens to a community when there are any foreign and strange subjects or rules that interfere? Disagreements and arguments start between two or more sides. David Sheffield, a psychologist who conducted the study at Staffordshire University of England, says, "The most shocking figure was that 7 percent said the use of mobile phones had caused them to lose a relationship or a job" (as cited in Birdwell, 2007,

para.10). The problem with concentration due to cell-phone usage leads to a loss of life-important things. The wife, girlfriend, or even employer needs your entire participation, especially your brain contribution to the task you are up to. Even though cellular phones and other digital assistants were invented to make people's lives easier and more convenient, they are literally beginning to worsen human beings' understanding of their usage. For



more information, I would like to show an example about one of my acquaintances, who did not leave his cell-phone even during his wedding ceremony. He kept filming everything that was happening around him. A wedding day is one of those days when individuals must use their electronic belongings at a minimum rate. Our homes and families ought to create the first and the most important place on our priority list because it is the place we grow as independent and responsible individuals.

Another reason why I agree with the author about the cell-phone effect on people is that using it redundantly may lead to an inability to stop. What is an addiction? A good explanation of it is a persistent use of a substance or thing known by its use to be physically, psychologically, or socially harmful. "Cell phones are a great technology... [Cell phones are] useful in a lot of situations. (But) one of the most important things is making sure you have some cell phone free time in your day", says Lisa Merlo, an assistant professor of psychiatry in the UF College of Medicine (as cited in Birdwell, 2007, para.16). people who use cell phones more often than needed aren't able to concentrate on an exact activity. Everything has a limit. Each operation or action has its end. What happens when something is not ending, or you are exhausted from

doing it, but you still have to be working on whatever task that need to be finished? You become impatient, angry, and you develop bad emotions, thoughts, and behavior. This is the same situation with the excessive phone use. The human's brain needs rest from doing something day-by-day with almost no stop. This is the way a human being's body is built. The brain and body function normally and healthily when they have time for recreation. If the "body engine" is clear, then the entire body is satisfied. As well as social media, cell phones must be cut in daily use. For instance, while driving, cell-phones must be kept in the handbags or special places made for technical devices in the automobile. If we look up statistics about car accident reasons, we see the most percentage is cell-phone use while driving. This means that people do not pay attention to the road, and often, this is the cause of fatal consequences. The newly invented electronic devices start to interfere into the lives of users who are not really interested in the "turn-off button." An option to awake people from an addiction they live with is to stop them from owning the addiction source. Everyone has to decide when it's the best time to press the "turn-off button."

A parent-child trustful relationship can be lost due to an exceeding cell-phone use. There are known addictions as well as unknown ones. As long as you have the knowledge of an addiction, you seek solutions. What about an unknown addiction? How do you find a way out if you do not even notice that you live with an addiction? People know addictions like cocaine, heroin, marijuana, or nicotine addiction. But what about electronic devices? What about a mother who spends most of her free time with a smartphone in her hand, instead of doing her routine activities, and what's more important than giving her child love and support? Children's behavior becomes worsened when they don't receive enough basic human needs, which are attention, advice, and just a simple and precious parent-child time. According to Merlo, having a phone is a necessity so that you will be available to other people, and you'll know what's going on (as cited in Birdwell, 2007). However, this is not a reason to overuse your electronic device, which

might be harmful for both children and parents. Children are sponges. They absorb not what their parents say, but what they do. Despite that, parents forget their obligations to their children. That's why there are so many terror attacks produced by young people who, perhaps, didn't accumulate all the good attitudes from their parents. Those children who need attention the most and do not receive it show their dissatisfaction and spite by violent acting. When a mother or father doesn't exert the necessary effort for raising a child, the only result in a child's behavior will be sorrowful. It is so important for children, our future, to grow up and mature in a caring and loving atmosphere.

Cellular phones are time-wasting possessions that produce in most families quite a big amount of unhappiness, disagreement, lack of support, and negative influence. How can people shut the door in front of an addiction? Being always conscious and careful of their lifestyle is a big chance to get over it. Relationships between loved ones or a parent-child bond is too important to neglect because of a momentary attraction. Do not let something from your outside life interfere with your inside principles of living. Nothing is more useful to fight an addiction than to face this problem and to try to heal yourself being strong as steel. As Merlo advises, for phoners who think that they have a problem or a parent whose children are obsessed with their phones, the use of the cell-phones must be downgraded to a basic phone with fewer features and limits on time and places for use (as cited in Birdwell, 2007). All I can say is that I agree with Birdwell because reducing the cell-phone use will ameliorate relationships in families and, more likely, will increase leisure time, which can be spent with children to create a stronger understanding and a genuine confidence. Life was given to us gratis. How we are going to spend it depends only on us. Let us make accurate decisions and be the ones who live a righteous life so that no one will collect undesired consequences.

Cristina Demerji
ESL W340
(Research paper)

My Special Memory

It was my birthday party when I was 15. A group of friends came to our house to celebrate my birthday. I brought so many things to make this beautiful celebration as my mother made me birthday cake.

First, we began the celebration with singing, dancing, and listening to music on the radio and recorder. After that, my friends talked about their futures. One said she will join the college of medicine when she graduates from high school and another said that she will study at The College of Administration and Economics.

Suddenly, we heard the sound of explosions and gunfire outside. An old neighbor came quickly to our house and told my mother to not let anyone go out of our home because there were dangerous things outside



the house and there was a battle in the street between armed groups. Some of my friend wanted to leave the house and go to their homes, but my mother forbid them to go out and explained to them the seriousness of the situation. My mom brought my birthday cake with its candles and put them in the middle of the hall. She invited us to complete the celebration and forget about what was going on outdoors.

It was a difficult and strange moment when the music for a song is the sounds of explosions and gunshots. But thanks to my mother, she made us rejoice with such a frightening situation.

Bushra Hasan
ESL W30

(Narrative essay)

A difficult Decision

When I was in Iraq in 2005 with my wife and my son, we lived a difficult life through the war in Iraq. There was no water and no electricity, and there were many bombs around the streets. Every time we were scared. Sometimes I couldn't go to my job. We lived without laws, so many people were killed from war and other people kid-napped.

One day my mother-in-law called me and told me some people kidnapped my father-in-law. She was scared and cried. I couldn't believe that because he was an old man and a good man. I told my wife about this story and she started to cry. The next day, the kid-nappers called us. They wanted money to let my father in law free. Two days later we collected all the money and gave it to them. After that they took the money and set him free. All my family was happy.

Then one day someone called me and told me

that I must pay money to them because I was a gold smith. They told us if I didn't pay they would kill me. I was scared about that. I asked my wife and we decided to leave this country and go to another country. We left for Syria and we stayed there seven years until we came to the USA. Finally, after we arrived in the USA, we started a different life with safety and freedom. After we lived in Sacramento, we had a good feeling. So I think that we made the difficult decision to leave Iraq and come to the USA but it was a really good choice for us. In the end, we found love and compassion from the American people.



Waseem
ESL W30

(Narrative essay)

Fell in Love Hundreds of Times

Did you ever fall in love with something? Yes with something, not someone! I'm talking about some activity that completely absorbs you and takes away all your thoughts and feelings. It takes you to an unknown world of fantasy. A world where everything is possible, where you can be free. The world which never hurts you because you want to belong to this world. For me, this world is ART. Every time I draw, I fall in love.

When I was three years old, I took my brothers oil paints and painted a wall in my parents' room. I don't know what I painted, but a few years ago my Mom told me that it was ugly. She was disappointed because she spent three hours washing the wall, but the paint would not wash off completely. Even now I remember that dirty white wall which never again became completely white. It was my first experience with oil paints. My second "special" painting was a drawing with markers in my Mom's recipe book. I was five years old, and I wanted to develop my talent. They were my brother's markers, of course. I don't remember what happened after that stupid act, but I remember three coloring books that my Mom gave me. I was the happiest person in the world.

While I growing up, I wanted to become an artist. In high school, I went to art class and fell in love again. I learned Russian folk painting. I admired the beautiful abstractions of folk painting. This kind of painting included several different types. In one, I drew luxurious and unusual flowers, birds, or horses; in another, minimalistic and weird abstractions. Despite their differences, I loved them all. I saved all of my pictures in a closet, even the ugly ones. I didn't want anyone to see them. They were only mine. Sometimes when my mom cleaned the room, she threw away hundreds of my drawings. Then I started to argue with her and cry. They were of great value to me. I saved some of them until I was eighteen. I could never look at them, but the fact that I kept them was important. I still don't understand why.

At the age of eighteen, I went to college to study fashion design. There I learned a lot of new things, such as proportion, projection, shape and volume of the human body. I learned how to draw draper-

ies, volumes, and textures of fabrics. There I started to create models of clothes that I had dreamed about. It lasted only three years. I loved this very much, but because I moved to the USA, I wasn't able to finish my education.

Now I am working towards an art degree at American River College. I have taken only one art class so far, but I have already fallen in love with a new drawing technique. It is a special technique, in which only dots and no lines are used. Some people think it is terribly difficult, but I think it is not. It takes a long time, but the results are worth it. I have drawn two portraits so far, and they are awesome. The first one is a school art project. The point was to draw yourself in

some fancy role. I chose Marilyn Monroe because I have short and curly hair, and I like her as an actress. This project took four weeks, and it doesn't look exactly like me; it looks more beautiful than me, but I still like the result.

The second one is a portrait of my friend. This summer I visited my friends in my native country,



Russia. One of them, Dima, looks like a photo-model. He has clear face lines, large lips, prominent huge cheekbones and deep eyes. I could not resist trying to draw him, and I managed it perfectly. The portrait looks exactly like him. When he saw it for the first time, he was delighted. He said, "This is the best gift ever." After that, all of my friends want their own portraits done by me.

I really love the feeling when inspiration fills me. I can't eat or sleep for a long time and still feel great because I am doing what I love. It doesn't happen often, but when it does, I create something special. I don't like to draw little sketches. Usually, I have a big project which takes a while. I already have eleven of them. I don't want to make a living as an artist, and I understand now that I don't have a huge talent. I just love what I do.

Elena Ardelian
ESL W50
(Narrative essay)



Nestscape -- Articles from The Web

Continued from page 1

founded more than two decades ago as a small, local effort to help kids in her native Sevier County, Tennessee.

"We never thought it would be this big," she told NPR in a quiet, wood-paneled room off the library's Great Hall. "I just wanted to do something great for my dad and for my home county and, at the most, maybe a couple of counties over. But then it just took wings of its own, and I guess it was meant to be."

Parton's inspiration for the Imagination Library was deeply personal: her father, Robert Lee Parton. Like many people of his generation, he began working at a young age to help support his family.

"My dad didn't get the chance to go to school. And Daddy couldn't read and write, and that was kind of crippling to him," Parton said. "He was such a smart man, though. He just had such good common sense. They call it horse sense in the country."

"But Daddy thought it was just something he couldn't learn after he was grown, so he never tried to learn to read and write. And that was just kind of embarrassing to him," she continued. "But I didn't want Daddy to feel embarrassed."

Parton was determined to give the children of Sevier County something her father never had: early access to books. She started the Imagination Library in 1995, and involved her father, too. He was able to see the program take off before he died in 2000.

"He got to hear the kids call me 'The Book Lady.' He got a big kick out of that," she said. "But he took great pride and felt like he'd helped do something special."

From its modest roots in eastern Tennessee, the Imagination Library has grown to reach children in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom.

The program is available in communities where a local partner has teamed up with the Imagination Library. Those partners could be nonprofits, state agencies or a public library system, for instance. Any child from birth to 5 — before they head off to kindergarten — is eligible. Local partners pay about \$25 per child per year, an amount that covers the cost of the book and shipping.

A panel of educators and reading specialists picks books



Dolly Parton reads *Coat of Many Colors*, a children's book based on one of her signature songs, to a group of children at the Great Hall of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday.

that are developmentally appropriate for each year of a child's life.

In Washington, D.C., on a recent evening, Uretta Todd and her 4-year-old son, August, read *Old Bear and His Cub*, one of the books they've received from the D.C. Public Library's partnership with the Imagination Library, *Books from Birth*.

Todd says her son loves getting his book in the mail every month: It's personal, it has his name on it, and it comes straight to their home.

She also loves the range of books.

"It exposes us to books we wouldn't have necessarily picked out," she says. Some examples include a bilingual English-Spanish version of *Just One More* or Dolly Parton's children's book, *I Am A Rainbow*, which uses colors to help kids talk about their feelings.

Across the country, in Anchorage, Alaska, 5-year-old Jack Price just graduated from the Imagination Library program.

"I have read to my son almost every day of his life," says his mother, Natasha Price, who signed up for the Imagination Library in the hospital when her son was born.

Price says she appreciates how the books come with suggestions for parents on how to engage with the words beyond the page, with questions and activities.

"Maybe it's been a long day and I can't really think of the right questions to ask, and they have these really great

prompts at the back of every book," she says.

Getting the books each month became "a really wonderful custom in our family," she says. "It was sad when we got our last book, which was about being ready for kindergarten, because we wouldn't get any more books in the mail."

Now that Jack has started kindergarten, Price says she sees "a direct correlation between reading to him every day and his reading comprehension skills."

And the science backs her up. The human brain develops rapidly during the first few years of life. And studies have found that reading out loud to a child not only promotes literacy and a love of reading, but also has lasting cognitive and educational benefits.

It also helps children build knowledge and expand their

horizons, Dolly Parton said.

"If you can read, even if you can't afford education, you can go on and learn about anything you want to know. There's a book on everything," she said. "So I just think that it's important for kids to be encouraged to read, to dream and to plan for a better life and better future."

And Parton's ambitions for the Imagination Library don't stop with 100 million books.

"We're going for a billion, maybe, in my lifetime," she said, with a delightful Dolly laugh. "I'm a big dreamer, you know."

<https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2018/03/01/589912466/dolly-parton-gives-the-gift-of-literacy-a-library-of-100-million-books>

8 Common American Gestures That'll Confuse the Sh*t Out of People Overseas



I spent most of 2016 in Asia, mainly in Japan and Hong Kong. Even though I'm Asian, most people were able to tag me as a foreigner before I'd even uttered a word. Perplexed,

I asked my friend, a local, why. "Well," she told me, "it's because of your body language. You're very American."

Very American, that is.

I was taken aback, but after applying some thought and a beer, I conceded we do have a number of gestures and postures that mark us as travelers. Many are universal and harmless. Others can make you look uncultured at best, or like a full-blown jackass at worst. So pay attention to these body language faux pas. You might just avoid unintentionally telling someone "up yours" in another country.

Hand gestures and their meanings vary

Those peace signs Asian tourists (and I admit, I as

well) love doing? Totally cool. But flip that around, with the back of your hand facing the person, and you've essentially turned it into a middle-finger salute in places like the UK, Ireland, and Australia.



It's not just the hammy peace sign. A number of other hand gestures, innocuous in some Western countries, are hideously offensive in others. Pointing seems pretty natural and harmless, until you get to China, where it's a gesture meant for dogs. But then, Chinese people would point with their middle finger, not realizing what that means. And while we're still talking about miscommunicating in China, sticking your pinky out means that you are not happy with something (like a thumbs-down), though it's not that common.

If you're traveling in Asia and you want someone to come to you, don't beckon with just your index finger. With your arm in front of you, and your palm angled down and facing your body, motion back



toward yourself with your whole hand.

And finally, the horn fingers might be something rockers throw at each other in the US of A, but in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Colombia, they tell someone that their wife is cheating on them. Talk about lost in translation.

Keep your hands out of your pockets

You think that resting your hands in your pockets seems like a chill thing to do, but in some Asian cultures, like Korea and Japan, you'd make people flip the hell out. It's a sign of arrogance and is plain rude.



Even nodding can trip you up

In some Eastern European countries like Bulgaria, nodding your head "yes" means "no," whereas shaking your head "no" means "yes." Yes, it's confusing, no?

Japan is particular about handing off gifts

This is especially important to remember if you're doing business. When you give your business card to someone, especially someone you've just met or who is older (or both), you must use both hands to present it. In Japan, they add a slight bow of the head. It's a sign of respect and standard business etiquette.

How long to hold someone's gaze

We've been taught that looking someone in the eyes makes you appear confident and respectful. However, to hold someone's eye contact in France can be seen as the equivalent of swiping right on Tinder. In other places, simply making eye contact can be a power move. In Brazil, for instance, workers such as waiters or nurses who want to show deference to someone's social standing may avoid eye contact altogether.

Asia is a bit of an odd duckling here. Normally, not

staring so openly is a matter of politeness. But if you're very clearly a foreigner, you might get stared down so hard you'll feel like you're in the circus. In most cases, people don't mean anything by it; they're just curious.

Don't automatically offer to shake hands

If you're going anywhere, take a humble moment to learn how they say hello.

It'll make your entry there far easier.



As an American, I'm used to shaking hands when I first meet someone, so this reflex struck in Japan when I was introduced to a friend of a friend. I stuck my hand out to shake her hand, but she chuckled and playfully chided me: "That's a very American thing to do." That's because in Japan, bowing is customary, and the deeper your bow, the more respectful it is.

An air kiss on each cheek (sometimes multiple times) is the standard greeting in many parts of Europe. Fijians might shake hands and then hold on for the entire duration of the first encounter (to pull away is rude). In Argentina, it's normal to hug and give a peck on the cheek. And in India, you put your palms together, as if to pray, tilt your head slightly, and say namaste.

When "talk to the hand" means something even ruder

You think it means "stop" or "you're not worth my time."

But in several places -- Greece, Pakistan, and Nigeria, for instance -- it's considered aggressive, on par with saying, "I'm going to rub shit on your face."



Don't walk into homes in Asia with your shoes on



Your shoes have probably trampled over all sorts of crap (sometimes literally), so no one in Asia wants that gunk in their house. Plus, it's insulting and impolite. Likewise, don't prop your feet on chairs or any other furniture. In places like Japan, you remove your shoes at the door and slip into house slippers, but this custom isn't just for someone's house. You need to remove your shoes before going into some traditional shops, places with tatami (straw) mats, and shrines. By extension, showing someone the soles of your feet -- considered a filthy part of the body -- could offend any friends you make in Thailand.

Don't give just anyone a thumbs-up

A natural response to someone saying or doing something cool is a thumbs-up. But in some parts of the world, such as West Africa and the Middle East, you're saying "up yours." In Thailand, a thumbs-up is like sticking out your tongue. Obviously, neither is (probably) the message you want to convey, so the best rule of thumb here is to keep that fifth digit in check. Unless -- hey, this is up to you -- you need a quick way to convey that specific meaning, perhaps with a smile, and maybe even get away with it. You're just a tourist, after all, and probably don't even know what it means.

<https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/reading-body-language-hand-signals-gestures-meanings-other-countries>

Top 5 Reasons to Read The Parrot!

1. You can't afford a subscription to the New York Times, The National Enquirer, or any other more-established publication.
2. The Beaver, ARC's much anticipated publication for hardworking and diligent students, has yet to be invented.
3. Printing Services goes to a lot of trouble to print The Parrot with only the finest of paper and ink so as not to soil your scholarly fingers.
4. You'll earn the appreciation of drivers as you enter a crosswalk with The Parrot clearly in your backpack for later enjoyment, as opposed to entering a crosswalk with your eyes fixed on your cell phone.



5. Textbooks are so boring! A five-minute break with The Parrot can restore your joi-de-vive and put you back on the path of health, wealth, and infinite wisdom.



Eat the World!

The Parrot represents students of many hues and sounds --- no news there. Indeed, birds of a feather flock together, right? They also eat together. The Parrot is proud to present Parrot fodder from around the world in this and subsequent issues. Squawk!

An Easy-to-Follow Recipe for The Best Sloppy Joes

The Best Sloppy Joes are easy to make and so delicious! Triple or quadruple the recipe for parties, backyard barbecues, and giant family vacations.



Prep Time 5 minutes

Cook Time 25 minutes

Total Time 30 minutes

Servings 6 servings

Calories 343 kcal

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 small onion, finely chopped



- 1 (8 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 Sandwich buns, split

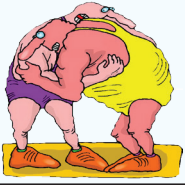


Instructions

1. In a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat, combine beef and onion. Cook until the meat is mostly browned, about 5 minutes. Drain well.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl whisk together tomato sauce, ketchup, brown sugar, mustard, vinegar, Worcestershire, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper.
3. Pour sauce ingredients over drained beef and stir until evenly coated. Cover and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve in buns.

<https://www.culinaryhill.com/the-best-sloppy-joes/>

Parrot Warbling



Grappling with Grammar

Grammar

Rules for Present Tense

1. **SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE:** Here, the action is simply mentioned and there is nothing being said about its completeness.

Key words: always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom, rarely, never, every day, on Sundays, etc.

Example: I eat.

He studies grammar every day.

2. **PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE:** Here, the action is on-going/ still going on and hence continuous.

Key words: now, right now, this quarter, etc.

Example: I am eating.

I am sleeping.

I can't talk on the phone. I am eating lunch.

3. **PRESENT PERFECT TENSE:** Here, the action is complete or has ended and hence Perfect.

Key words: already, yet, just, ever, never, ___ times, since + a particular time, for + a duration of time

Example: I have eaten.

I have eaten Indian food two times.

4. **PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE:** Here, the action has been taking place for some time and is still ongoing.

Key words: for, since, lately

Example: I have been eating.

I have been eating a lot of vegetables lately.

<http://cetking.com/must-remember-12-rules-for-tenses-grammar/>

Idiom--Attic

Icing On The Cake



When you already have it good and get something on top of what you already have.

Example: He was already happy with his pay hike, **the icing on the cake** came when he received a large bonus.

<http://www idiomsite.com/index3.htm>

Beak Speak

Soft 'c' and hard 'c' and soft 'g' and hard 'g'

When the letter c is followed by the vowels e, i or y, it usually makes its soft sound.

Examples of that are **cent**, **circus** and **cytoplasm**.

The letter c also makes a hard sound, as in **cat** and **cocoa**.



When the letter g is followed by the vowels e, i or y, it usually makes its soft sound.

Examples of that are **gel**, **giant** and **gym**.

The letter g also makes a hard sound, as in **gas**, **gorilla** and **yogurt**.

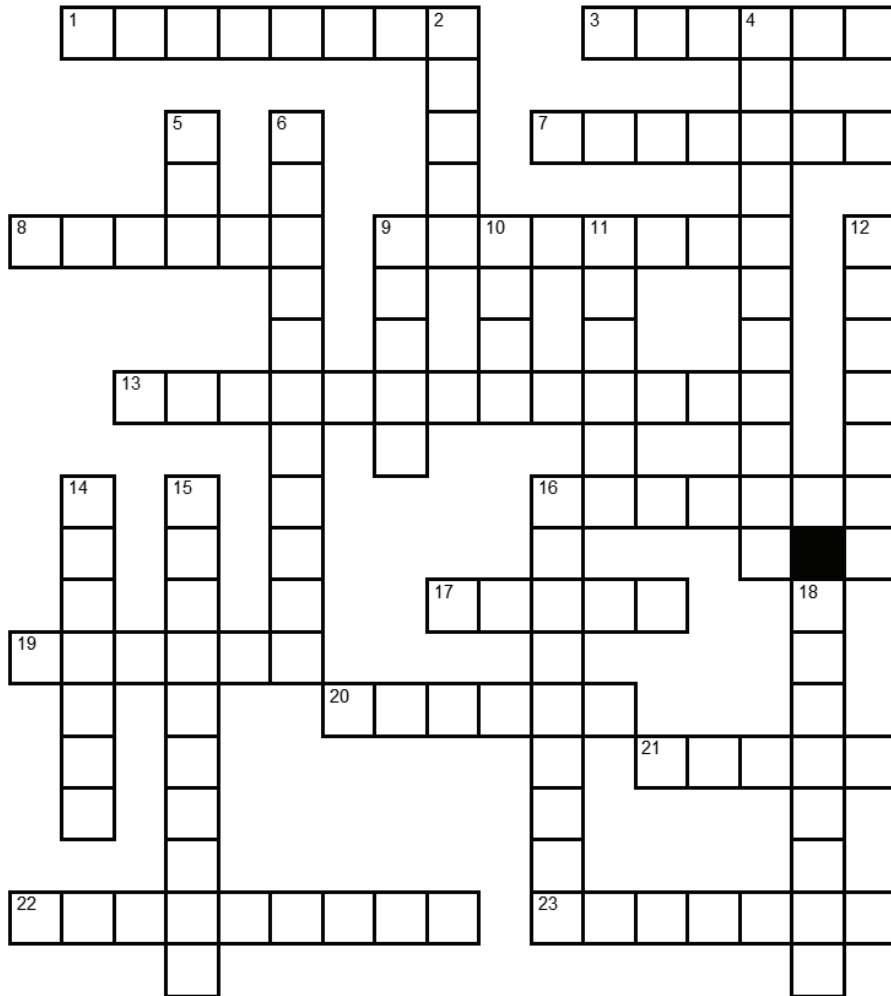
<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/reading-issues/14-phonics-rules-for-reading-and-spelling#slide-8>

Some More Parrot Fun Stuff

Jobs Crossword:

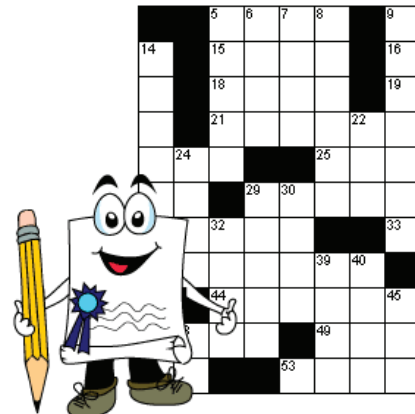
Across

1. Somebody who plays an instrument.
3. Someone who grows crops.
7. Somebody who fixes teeth.
8. A person who serves food.
9. Someone who fixes cars.
13. Somebody who catches criminals.
16. A person who plays sports.
17. Someone who stars in a movie.
19. A person who sings songs.
20. Somebody who helps sick people.
21. Somebody who flies air-planes.
22. A person who does experiments.
23. Somebody who teaches.



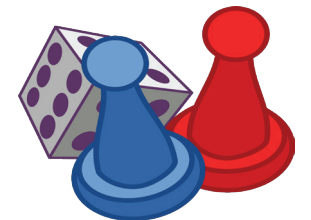
Down

2. A person who helps a doctor.
4. Someone who delivers mail.
5. Somebody who helps sick animals.
6. Somebody who puts out fires.
9. Someone who digs for metal ore in the ground.
10. Someone who cooks food.
11. A person who paints pictures.
12. A person who protects a country.
14. Someone who cleans buildings.
15. A person who makes computer games.
16. A person who goes to outer space.
18. A person who tells us the news.



Indoor Games

Find and circle all of the games that are hidden in the grid.



T	H	U	M	B	W	R	E	S	T	L	I	N	G	B	L	R
K	U	H	H	U	J	J	N	I	S	P	Y	C	Q	B	R	S
M	H	P	Y	S	D	L	W	O	Z	T	R	H	M	N	N	D
A	U	Q	I	S	I	E	F	S	K	A	Q	O	S	O	G	Y
G	U	S	M	H	A	F	E	I	Z	U	N	T	I	E	D	V
O	Z	F	I	Q	S	Z	O	Y	A	O	F	T	V	L	N	Q
O	B	C	A	C	S	E	E	G	P	G	S	E	E	D	J	C
E	L	H	H	K	A	I	L	O	N	E	M	R	N	A	Q	H
T	X	C	C	A	G	L	L	T	U	T	I	C	S	R	C	E
W	D	A	Y	H	R	Y	C	Q	T	A	V	O	K	C	P	C
E	J	S	T	X	U	A	Y	H	T	A	W	L	F	S	J	K
O	D	S	P	O	K	T	D	I	A	B	B	D	S	T	C	E
D	X	E	A	J	N	F	L	E	U	I	S	E	X	A	G	R
T	S	H	I	E	T	O	V	D	S	J	R	R	N	C	R	S
J	E	C	W	W	S	G	R	U	E	K	D	S	S	P	C	Z
L	A	T	I	X	S	K	N	I	W	Y	L	D	D	I	T	G
D	I	A	M	D	L	O	V	T	I	C	T	A	C	T	O	E

BATTLESHIP

CAT'S CRADLE

CHARADES

CHECKERS

CHESS

CRAZY EIGHTS

GO FISH

HOTTER, COLD-

ER

I SPY

JACKS

MONOPOLY

MUSICAL

CHAIRS OLD

MAID

SOLITAIRE

THUMB WRES-

TLING

TIC, TAC, TOE

TIDDLYWINKS

TWENTY QUES-

TIONS



Parrot Poetry



Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

by William Wordsworth

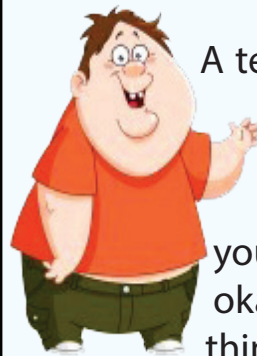
Rigoberto's Riddles

How many men were born last year?



None, only babies were born.

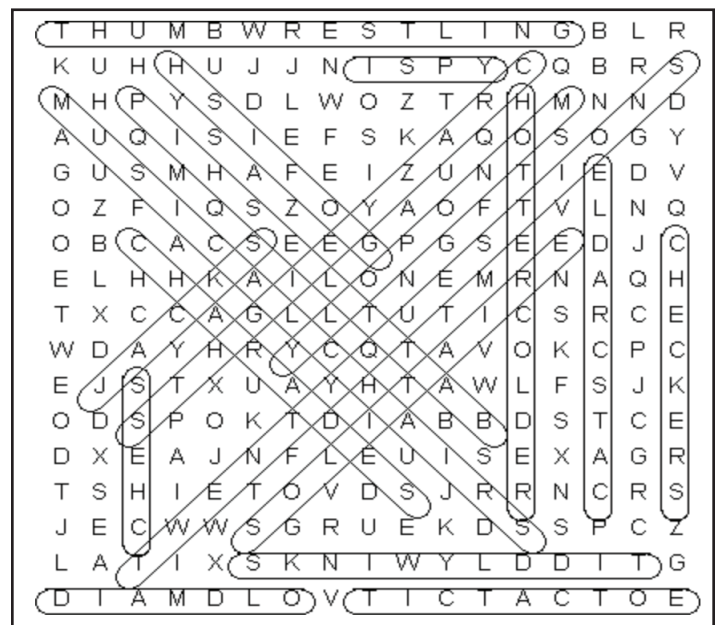
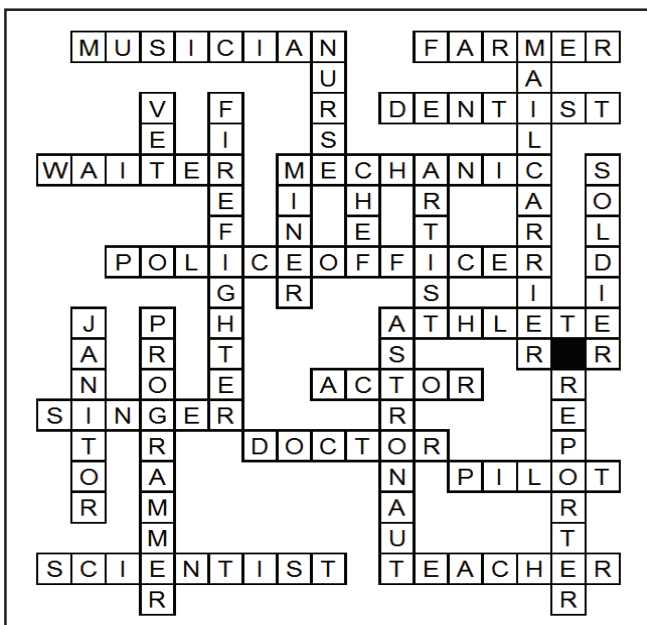
Silly Vasily's Chuckle Chamber



A teacher reprimanded the teenager in the hall, "Do you mind telling me whose class you're cutting this time?" "Like," the young teen replied, "uh, see, okay, like it's like I really don't like think like that's really important, y'know, like because I'm y'know, like I don't get anything out of it." "It's English class, isn't it?" replied the smiling teacher.



<http://www.jokes4us.com/peoplejokes/teachersjokes/cuttingclassjoke.html>



Granny Noetal

Dear Granny Noetal,

My teacher says my conversation skills are good but when I'm around Americans, I trip over my words and my pronunciation gets bad. What can I do to solve this problem?

Telmi Sumtengut,

Dear Telmi,

It's an interesting question that was recently asked of ESL students. I asked prof. Hoggan about this and here's what he said: "The only way to practice speaking when you are nervous is to practice speaking when you are nervous! In other words, try to create for yourself more opportunities to speak with Americans. However, create situations where the results of the conversation are not so important. For example, go to a public library and ask a librarian what books she recommends about a topic



you are interested in. Go to a supermarket and ask a question such as "where can I find raspberry jam?" If you don't understand the answers, ask for clarification.

Librarians and store clerks are supposed to have good customer service, which means they should listen carefully and explain if you don't understand. Try asking them a second question and maybe you will have a short conversation. In addition, if you want a really, safe comfortable place to practice, you should go to the ESL Center here at ARC. Did you know that there are conversation groups where you can practice speaking with other ESL students? You might find it a little more comfortable than talking to Americans. In short, create more chances to practice speaking. Your mouth and brain need practice working together, so give them some exercise. Good luck!"

Granny

Interview with Mr. McCusker

Continued from page 1

do not want to follow rules. That to me is part of the job that I dislike the most. I really dislike having to enforce rules.

The Parrot: What kind of rules?

Mr. McCusker: The most complaints that we get from students is about noise. We ask the students if they are on the cellphone to go outside and just every once in a while the students who are on the cellphones, once we asked them to go outside, will become very angry, so that is the most challenging. It is very rare but when it happens, it is very challenging.

The Parrot: When did you become interested in your field?

Mr. McCusker: I was 26, 27, I graduated from college in 1996 and then I knew I wanted to go back to school. I didn't know for a while and I was thinking about libraries and how I always loved libraries

and how I thought it was really important that they helped change people's lives, I decided I would try going to school to be a librarian and it was really interesting.

The Parrot: What is the most interesting thing in your current job?

Mr. McCusker: The part of the job that I like the best is teaching. We teach usually like if an English class has to write a paper, the professor will bring them in and we will have a class with them about how to do research and how to write a paper, so that is the part I like the best.

The Parrot: In your mind, how do you see your future working in this post?

Mr. McCusker: I feel like every year I learn new things, like learn how to be a better teacher, how to help students better, how to be more effective. So I feel like hopefully I am going to keep being better and better to help students more.

The Parrot: What are the functions of the library



and how have libraries changed in the last 20 years?

Mr. McCusker: The library exists to support the students. To accomplish the college mission, to help students succeed academically, and I think through the years we are always trying to figure out what are the ways that we can help students better. When I started here, we sometimes would have textbooks for students; now in this semester I think we have at least one of every textbooks, so we are always looking for ways to help students succeed and help support students. We are always trying new things. I think getting more textbooks really works. We offer laptops now; students can check out laptops. We do online chatting reference so if they are looking at a web page and they have a question, they can ask us right there.

And in the last 20 years, a lot of things changed: we have more textbooks, more ways for students to get help, like by Email, online chat, we work with professors in classes. If they are taking an online course, students can talk to the librarians in the online course. The Internet has changed things.

The Parrot: What is your description of a good library?

Mr. McCusker: A good library figures out how to maximize the resources that it has access to, to serve the needs of its users, so every library will have different resources. Some libraries might be really well funded, so I say a really good library figures out how to utilize what they have to meet the needs of its users.

The Parrot: What are the resources that students can use in this library?

Mr. McCusker: One of the big ones that I wanted everyone to know about is textbooks. If students cannot afford textbooks or they are getting financial aid and their financial aid has not come yet and they don't have the money to have a textbook that they can study from, they can use it in the library. We got the computer lab, so students who need to work on a computer can come in and work on anything school related. We have access to data bases full of information to help students with research assignments. We have the book collections; stu-

dents can borrow a book either for their studies or for children. We have a children's book collection or if they just want something to read. But one of the big things is the librarians. Students who walk in to the library, the most important thing for them is to talk to a librarian and a librarian will help them to figure out what we have that will help them.

The Parrot: What are your plans to improve the library more?

Mr. McCusker: I want to make more videos to put on our web sites. That shows students how to do research, so I want to make more materials like that and then also I want to create research exercises for legal assistance for students so they can get some practice doing research.

The Parrot: Is there any difference between a library and information technology?

Mr. McCusker: The difference is the human component (the librarians) to make using information technology easier.

The Parrot: Do you have only English books?

Mr. McCusker: It is not only English books but it is very nearly only English books. We do have a bunch of dictionaries in Spanish to English, Persian to English. We have materials for English learners but if you want to read something in Spanish, it is very unlikely that we have anything you want.

The Parrot: How often do people donate books to the library?

Mr. McCusker: Not very often. Sometimes we do get a donations that we use, but a lot of times if we get donation, it will be stuff that it is not useable, like it will be a textbook that is 10 years old and that is not something that we can really use.

The Parrot: What is the age range of students that use the ARC library?

Mr. McCusker: I would say it is probably anywhere from 16 to 90. Sometimes we have high school students who are taking a class here and sometimes we have very much older students.

The Parrot: Why is it important to read book?

Mr. McCusker: It is important because it is impor-

tant to be an effective communicator. You have to look at examples of how other people communicate and so if you want to communicate your ideas to other people in a place like Facebook and Twitter, you have to know how to communicate and the more that you have seen by reading books, papers and magazines, the more you are able to be a good communicator. Children who spend time reading are better prepared for school, when they start school. If they have spent time reading or having people reading to them, the ability to use the language is going to be better and they are going to be more able to be still and learn.

The Parrot: How does reading help students to make improvement with their knowledge?

Mr. McCusker: It is very important because a lot of information that professors want students to observe, some of it will be given by professors but the huge amount of information that they want you to know, they will expect you to get from reading, so being a professional reader is going to make your school a lot easier.

The Parrot: Is there a penalty for late returns? Why?

Mr. McCusker: Yes there is, like 50 cent per day. Because we want to improve everyone's ability to

be able to get the book.

The Parrot: What would you like to tell the people who do not read books?

Mr. McCusker: Books make life better. If I am on a plane or a train and see other people do not have a book, I feel bad for them. If you read a book you will be so much happier.

The Parrot: Then, is there one book that you would like students to read?

Mr. McCusker: People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn. It is a history book and it discusses a lot of things about United States history that have never been talked about.

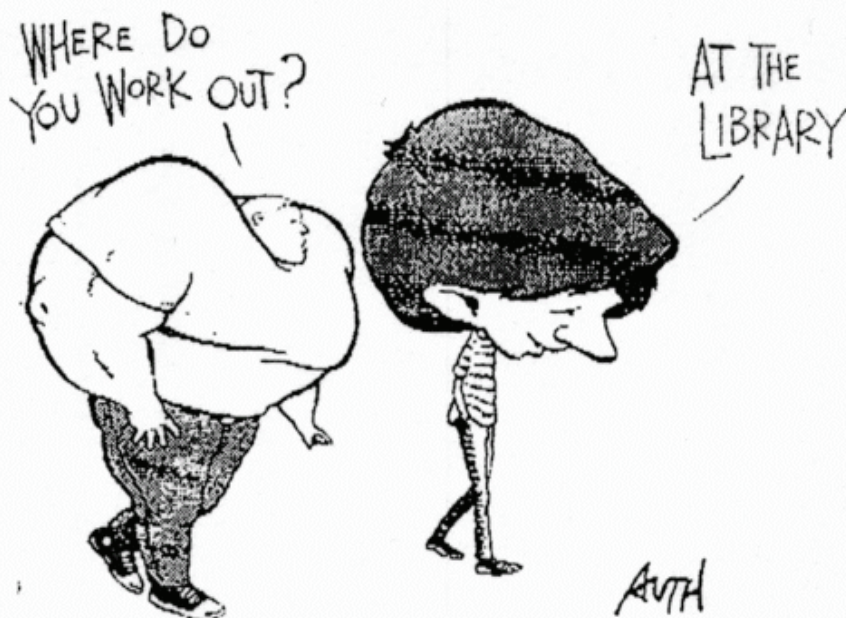
The Parrot: What do you do in your down time?

Mr. McCusker: I play goalkeeper on several indoor soccer teams. I enjoy reading, mostly crime fiction and comic books, and I play a lot of soccer and basketball with my 8-year-old son.

The Parrot: Thanks for your time, Mr. McCusker

Mr. McCusker: You are very welcome.

Parroteer: Saman Salahi Yekta



What was the biggest surprise about America when you got here?



“There were a lot of things, not just only one. The first thing is freedom because in my country, Iraq, there is no freedom, but after you graduate from high school here, you can choose any major you want. There you can’t because it depended on the grades.”

Osamah Al Neama (Computer Science)



“The biggest surprise is studying here. Back in my country, Afghanistan, there was no financial aid or anything to support students in their studies. However, I am working at the student center to get experience and studying computer science at the same time.”

Remez Hassan (Computer Science)



“The biggest surprise is tax returns. Who can believe that the government pays the people at the end of each year? It is very cool. It’s not like in my country Russia.”

Andrii Pidsadnyi (Computer Science)



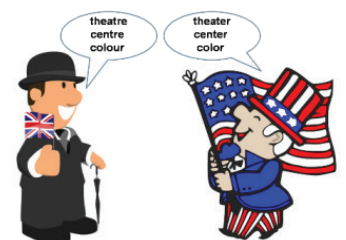
“Freedom in your studies. Back in Iraq, there are a lot of difficult classes and there is a hard rule. You can’t have a cellphone with you, and there is a lot of homework to do. In midterm and final tests, you must study all the book from the first page to the last page, but here it’s so easy.”

Kareem Abu Hamra (History)



“The language is not like what I had studied before. I had studied British English and when I came here, I was unable to understand American English. In my country, Iraq, we don’t speak, talk, and write in the lectures; we just listen.”

Nidhol (ESL L40)





“The biggest surprise is that girls and boys study, work, and talk with each other. So, in my country we don’t have like that and we don’t like it. There are also many people from different nationalities.”

Mohammed (ESL Lab)



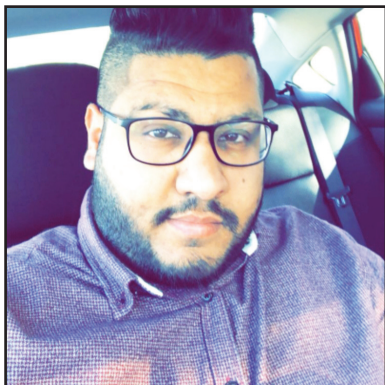
“Honestly, smoking marijuana is so popular here. We don’t have like that in Ukraine. In addition, I had not studied back in my country when I grew up, but here the education is interesting and enthusiastic.”

Igor (ESL R310)



“The education is successful and developed here. There are many online classes, which we don’t have in Iraq. There is another surprise here. The appointments here are very organized and you can make your appointment on line.”

Saqr Faris (ESL R50)



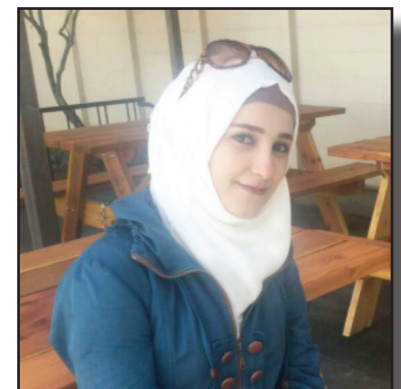
“I had finished my studies in my country, Iraq, and I got my certificate, but when I came here they didn’t accept my certificate. Therefore, I am starting my studies here from the beginning because I cannot get a great future without finishing my education.”

Mustafa (ESL R50)



“The big surprise about America when I got here is that it has very organized streets and no one drives the car without a driver’s license and this is different from my Syria because there is a lot of congestion and chaos there. I was also surprised that all the buildings were built of wood, not like Syria. The buildings there were built of stone and sand. The biggest surprise also is the taste of the food is so different and people here are like robots. You cannot know their feeling. It’s a perfect life but without comfort.”

Alaa Turkmany (ESL W50)



Out of the Cage

College Hour- StudentsGiveHope.org: A Way to Inspire and Bolster Students Thursday, April 19, 2018

12:15pm – 1:15pm

Would you like to inspire your students, have them participate in actual open-access biomedical research, and teach STEM in a hands-on way? StudentsGiveHope.org is a burgeoning interdisciplinary project started here at ARC. We bring course-embedded and substantive research opportunities into your classroom and lab. We do this so that ALL students get a chance to experience research and learn in the process. In this College Hour, we will describe StudentsGiveHope.org, why it is a novel and beneficial approach, and how it may be incorporated into your curricula to teach STEM, inspire students in using what they learn to help others, and prepare them for their careers.

Location: Raef Hall 160

College Hour- Asian American Students Club Presents: Who are you Tuesday, April 24, 2018

12:15pm – 1:15pm

"Asians look alike!" "Oh, Asians are all the same!" "Asians are really good in math!" These are ongoing stereotypes the Asian American Pacific Islander communities experience every day. During the panel discussion, students will share insights of their experiences on educational inequities, discover and uncover their identity, and analyze their various cultural heritages.

Location: Raef Hall 160

College Hour- UNITE Presents Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month Thursday, April 26, 2018

12:15pm – 1:15pm

Model Minority Myth: All Asians are Doing "Just Fine"

This two-part presentation focuses on deconstructing the Model Minority Myth through a lecture followed by a panel of both students and community members in higher education and the professional world. The myth of the Asian model minority imposes the societal expectation forced onto the Asian and Pacific Islander American experience: they are "naturally" smart, wealthy, and hard-working; self-reliant, obedient, docile, and uncomplaining; and ultimately? Never in need of help. They're doing "just fine". But a closer look at this myth writes in asterisks and footnotes to create a very different conclusion: "Asian American" is far too broad a category, and they are not doing "just fine".

Location: Raef Hall 160



Questions/Comments?



Student Editor: **Elaf Khafaja**

Please let us know what we can do to improve "The Parrot." We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Send us an e-mail, call, or just drop by Professor Bracco's office D337 (Davies Hall), call (916) 484-8988, or e-mail Braccop@arc.losrios.edu. To see The Parrot in color go to http://www.arc.losrios.edu/ARC_Majors/Humanities/ESL/The_Parrot.htm